



## January is National Stalking Awareness Month

**Stalking is a dangerous crime** that affects over 6 million people annually in the U.S.

In Virginia, stalking is defined as *conduct (on more than one occasion) which places a person, or his or her family or household member, in reasonable fear of death, sexual assault, or bodily injury.*<sup>1</sup>

Stalking is a unique crime, because stalkers are obsessed with controlling their victims' actions and feelings. Stalkers will frequently threaten and harass, and in many instances will actually physically injure their victims.

***Stalking is a crime that can be committed against anyone, regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or geographic location.***

- As many as 1 in 4 women and 1 in 13 men have experienced stalking victimization at some point during their lifetime.
- The majority of stalking victims are stalked by someone they know.
- 66% of female victims and 41% of male victims of stalking are stalked by a current or former intimate partner.
- More than half of female victims and more than  $\frac{1}{3}$  of male victims of stalking indicated that they were stalked before the age of 25.<sup>2</sup>
- Stalkers often use technology to contact their victims.

### WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE BEING STALKED

**Trust your instincts.**

*Victims of stalking often feel pressured by friends or family to downplay the stalker's behavior, but stalking poses a real threat of harm.*

**Call the police if you feel you are in any immediate danger.**

*Explain why even some actions that seem harmless—like leaving you a gift—are causing you fear.*

**Keep a record or log of each contact with the stalker. Also, document any police reports.**

**Save all e-mails, text messages, photos, and postings on social networking sites as evidence of the stalking behavior.**

**Contact the toll-free Virginia Crime Victim Assistance Info-Line at 1-888-887-3418.**

*Information is available at [www.dcjs.virginia.gov/victims](http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/victims).*

For more information about stalking, contact the Stalking Resource Center at the National Center for Victims of Crime.

Phone: 202-467-8700 Email: [src@ncvc.org](mailto:src@ncvc.org) Web: [www.victimsofcrime.org/src](http://www.victimsofcrime.org/src)



<sup>1</sup> Stalking—Code of Virginia §18.2-60.3

<sup>2</sup> Michele C. Black et al., "The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report," (Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011).